



ESTABLISHED 1659

CITY OF NORWICH
CONNECTICUT

NORWICH HUMAN SERVICES

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**Testimony for Appropriations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly
March 2nd, 2015 Hearing**

By Lee-Ann Gomes, Director, Norwich Human Services

Re: Youth Service Bureaus

Dear Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations Committee:
Testimony March 3, 2015 5pm Appropriations Secondary Education Subcommittee

I am writing this testimony to strongly urge you to restore the cuts made in the Governor's upcoming budget to Youth Service Bureaus across the state; specifically the reduction in the SDE grant from \$2,989,268 was reduced by \$700,000, and the elimination of the Enhancement Grant where \$620,000 was dispersed across 102 Youth Service Bureaus. . In Norwich 2013-2014, we were able to use our State cost sharing grant to leverage an additional \$434,565 in State, federal and private grants.

These cuts will amount to a tremendous loss of services to our youth and families. As the Director of Norwich Human Services I can relay to you how valuable the services they provide are to our community. Juvenile justice programs, efforts to increase after school programs, suicide prevention, positive youth development will all be adversely affected.

The move to relocate funding from SDE to DCF seems to us to be an inadvertent way in which to cut aid to municipalities; something the Governor has stated he is not inclined to do. Additionally, this shifting of oversight will impede the progress made in developing data collections systems and an RBA framework of results that tie YSB involvement with school performance.

We strong urge you not to allow these proposed cuts and changes to occur to s aystem that is responding well to the needs of comities youth and families.

Respectfully,

L-A Gomes

Lee-Ann Gomes